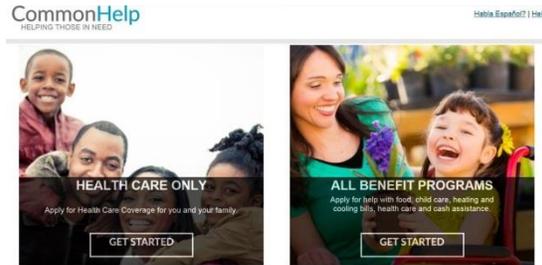


About CommonHelp

CommonHelp is the Commonwealth of Virginia’s fast and easy way to apply online for multiple Department of Social Services (DSS) programs such as:

- + CC – Child Care
- + EA – Energy Assistance
- + HCC – Health Care Coverage – including Medicaid, FAMIS and Commercial Health Insurance
- + SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- + TANF – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families



You are a trusted partner. With your assistance, we will ensure citizens across the state of Virginia are properly served. Below you will find a summary of the CommonHelp improvements and some guidelines to provide support.

What’s new about CommonHelp?

CommonHelp is being improved to provide a streamlined application path to citizens who want to apply for Health Care which creates a more user-friendly experience for the customer.

What’s new?



Customers can choose to screen or apply for benefits in two different ways:

Health Care only: applying for Medicaid and Families & Children FAMIS/commercial healthcare coverage

All Benefit Programs: applying for one or more benefit programs including:

- **CC** - Child Care
- **EAP** - Energy Assistance Program
- **FAMIS** - Family Access to Medical Insurance Security
- **Medicaid:**
 - **ABD** - Aged, Blind and Disabled/ Long-term Care
 - **F&C** - Families & Children
- **SNAP** - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- **TANF** - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families



Customers can

- Provide and receive more information electronically

- Undergo ID proofing and receive near real-time results

- Complete Screening to find out what customers may be eligible for



- Major changes to the look and feel make for a more user - friendly experience

- Navigation tabs, updated images and prompts aid the customer in completing the information needed

How do I know which option is best?

There is a “Get Started” button on each option door, upon clicking, the applicant will be directed to a page that explains that option.

Screening

What’s the purpose of screening?

CommonHelp provides a quick and easy way for people who live in Virginia to find out what they may be eligible to receive. Be sure to encourage all to apply regardless of the screening results.

- + *We encourage all applicants to screen*



How will screening change?

Customers can choose to be pre-screened in CommonHelp. Through this functionality, customers can find out, almost instantly, whether they may be eligible for benefit programs based on basic demographic information. With the improvements, customers can now choose to be screened on the information related to

- + Health Care/Medicaid Assistance (MA) only **or**
- + All benefit programs

Where is screening located online?

Screening will be accessible from the “Am I Eligible?” button on the CommonHelp homepage

What is needed for screening?

After choosing which screening option best fits their needs:

The customer will be led through a series of questions related to people in their home, income, etc. which CommonHelp will use to determine potential eligibility.

- + *CommonHelp notifies customers when they are most likely eligible or not eligible for any programs.*

More improvements for Medicaid customers

- + **Medicaid Management Information Systems (MMIS) Check:** When a customer applies for Health Care, CommonHelp will check MMIS to determine if any household member is already enrolled in Medicaid. If any household member is already enrolled, the customer will receive a message that someone in their household already receives Medicaid and will suggest the customer report their changes on that case instead of submitting a new application.
- + **Saves customer time:** with the MMIS check, unnecessary applications may decrease

- + **Identity proofing and near real-time eligibility:** A customer applying for Health Care will have the option to undergo ID proofing. If successfully ID proofed, this option will allow them to receive near real time eligibility results for Medicaid-only at the end of the application process.
- + **Translations** - The entire CommonHelp system is also available in Spanish. Use the Spanish version of the system by clicking the Habla Espanol? link found in the top right area of the page.



What if the customer already has an existing Medicaid Application (MA)?

The customer should choose “Renew My Benefits” to submit a renewal instead of a new application.

Identity (ID) Proofing

This feature will use information from external sources to ask the customer a series of personal questions that will verify his/her identity.

- + A success or failure message will be provided to the customer upon answering all questions, which will depend on the accuracy of the responses
- + ID Proofing can only be attempted twice
- + Almost instant eligibility results can be received if ID Proofing is successfully completed
- + **When assisting a citizen, be sure the application is entered with their information. Once the system locks in personal information, the benefits are under that person’s name.**

How to use CommonHelp

Navigation Tips

Here are the basics for getting around the system.



- Saves information entered on the page and takes you to the next page



- Takes you back to the previous page or tab



- Enables you to include another item to the information you're entering, such as an additional person, another employer, a source of income, an additional expense, or an additional insurance policy



- Saves your un-submitted application and allows you to leave it to come back at a later time or date



- Allows you to change information you entered earlier in CommonHelp



- Lets you remove information you entered earlier in the CommonHelp application, renewal or change. For example, you can remove a person or an employer



- Lets you tell CommonHelp that something has ended, for example a job or pregnancy

Is the customer eligible?

Click the "Am I Eligible?" button on the CommonHelp home page and have the customer answer short questions and be told if he/she and the members of their household may or may not be eligible for assistance. It takes about 15 minutes to complete. The information entered here is not saved. Customer will have to reenter this information if he/she decides to apply.

The "Am I Eligible?" tool is not required. It's an optional step, but it can help give an idea of what to expect if it's decided to complete and submit an application.

The "Am I Eligible?" tool is divided into two sections, **Health Care Only** and **All Benefit Programs**. It will allow the customer to see if he/she and members of their household may be eligible for health care coverage only or health care coverage along with other benefit programs.

Apply for Benefits

If a customer only wants to apply for Health Care Coverage for him/her and their family and if they do not want to request any other benefits, click the Get Started button for the Health Care Only window.

If the customer wants to apply for food assistance, child care, cash assistance, help with heating or cooling expenses, aged/blind/disabled health care, or Long Term Care – or he/she wants to apply for Health Care Coverage in addition to any of these programs – click the Get Started button of the All Benefit Programs window.

It typically takes about **20-60 minutes** to complete the application. If the customer needs to stop, he/she can save and exit the application at any time and return to complete it later.

What does the online application include?

Get Started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guides customer through setting up an account to create a User ID and Password and allows him/her to begin entering information about themselves.
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows customer to enter details about him/herself and the members of the household.
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects information about resources held by the customer and other household members such as bank accounts, vehicles, homes, property and life insurance.
Financial Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asks for information about employment income and other types of income received by the customer and other members in the household.
Bills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes questions about the housing bills, other bills such as medical bills, dependent care bills and deductions for all household members.
Additional Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows customer to enter information about health insurance, foster care and tax credits for members of the household.
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asks to review all the information entered in CommonHelp up to this point; provides a chance to make additions or corrections.
Finish Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows customer the ability to upload documents to submit with application, appoint an authorized representative, authorize a Certified Application Counselor or Navigator or Broker.
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows customer to enter additional information on the application
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains which programs were applied for and allows customer to apply for additional Benefit programs or other Medicaid programs.
Signing your Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives customer the opportunity to read the rights and responsibilities, consent to VDSS to exchange information with other agencies, authorize use of income data to renew coverage and electronically sign the application
Submit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If customer is ready to submit their application, click the Next button. They will be asked to sign back into the account. Once they have signed back in, click the Submit button at the bottom of the screen to complete submission



Be sure to write down your User ID and Password. They will be needed to start the application. The customer will also need them to re-enter the system should they decide to save and exit the application and return to it later.

Next, the About You section collects basic information about the customer and their household. Prepare for this section by having the following information ready:

- + Names of household members, address and telephone number
- + Household income from jobs, child support and other income sources
- + Social Security Numbers and birth dates of household members
- + Current or recent health insurance information
- + Housing and utility expense information
- + Dependent care or disability expense information, including day care and medical expenses
- + Resource information, such as bank accounts, vehicles, homes, property, life insurance, etc.
Please note: Some social service programs do not need resource information. Resource questions will only be asked if this information is needed to determine eligibility
- + U.S. citizens, must declare citizenship and provide proof of identity
- + Non-U.S. citizens must provide documentation indicating lawful residence in the U.S.
- + For Food Assistance (SNAP), you must include children under age 22 and also include anyone else who eats with you

After submitting your application

With CommonHelp the customer and their authorized representative can check benefits, report changes and renew benefits.

Please note: You cannot use CommonHelp to check benefits, report changes, or renew benefits with Child Care or Energy assistance.

Will information be safe?

CommonHelp is private and confidential. Information entered online into CommonHelp is protected. Access to personal information is secured by use of a User ID and password. Each application also receives a unique tracking number which should be kept safe. The customer should use this number if they ever need to call or stop by an office to discuss their application.

The Virginia Department of Social Services will see if the customer qualifies for assistance. They will send the customer a letter with a decision on their application called a Notice of Action. The Notice of Action will include a case number.

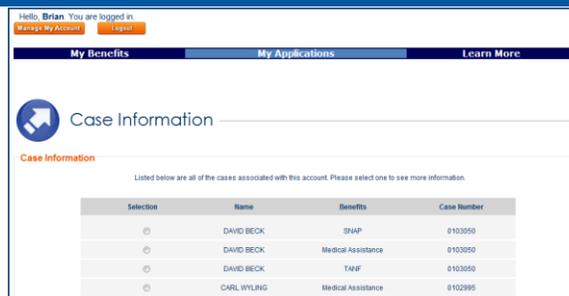
The customer will have the opportunity to link the case to their CommonHelp account by having the correct client ID and case number. The customer can Check Benefits, Report Household Changes, and Renew Your Benefits through CommonHelp once the case has been linked.

How to Link Customer Case and Account

Go to the CommonHelp home page and click the “Check My Benefits” button. Sign into CommonHelp. Click the Manage My Account button. In the Case Association section, click the check box and click the ‘Link Case’ button. Enter your Case number and Client ID and click “Continue.” The case will be successfully linked.

Check Your Benefits Online

To check benefits online with CommonHelp, go to the CommonHelp home page and click the Check My Benefits button. Type the User ID and password.



View the Case Information page (above). It shows the cases linked with customers’ accounts. Select the radio button for the case that you want to review.



The Case Information page has 3 tabs– My Benefits, My Applications and Learn More. If the customer has only one case they will be navigated directly to the Case Information page.



The image above is for a detailed MA (Medical Assistance) benefit. There are 3 tabs at the top: Benefit Details, Benefit History, and Contact Information. When clicked, more details appear.

Start on the tab called “My Benefits.” The My Benefits tab shows you:

- + The name of the benefits being received under this case
- + The application/case status
- + The names of all the people in the household who are receiving the benefits
- + Any documentation needed to give to the case worker
- + Upcoming renewal dates

- + **Benefits Details** – This shows you what the benefit payment details are for this month.
- + **Benefit History** – This shows payment details for the past 12 months.
- + **Contact Information** – This shows you the name, location, address, and phone number of your assigned case worker, and their contact information.

Report Changes

When customer is approved for benefits, they will need to report certain changes to their case worker.

To report changes, click “Report My Changes” on the CommonHelp home page and enter the User ID and password. Click the “Report My Changes” link at the top of the screen. If you have more than one case, click the radio button next to the case that needs to be updated. Next click the boxes next to the changes the customer wants to report.

CommonHelp will take the customer step-by-step through questions that let them report their changes. At the end, he/she will be prompted to submit the changes.

Renew Benefits

CommonHelp shows when a customer needs to renew benefits. To see if it’s time to renew, go to the CommonHelp home page. Click “Renew My Benefits.” Sign in to CommonHelp with User ID and password. Go to the My Renewals section to see if it is time to renew any benefits. Click

the link next to the benefit(s) the customer wants to renew.

CommonHelp will take the customer step-by-step through questions that let them renew their benefits. At the end, they will be asked to submit the renewal application.

Stopping a New Application to Come Back at a Later Time

With CommonHelp, the customer can stop their application and then come back to it at a later time or date.

To do this, click the **Save + Exit** button before closing the internet browser.

If the customer closes the internet browser without first clicking **Save + Exit**, they will lose information from the page exited. Always click **Save + Exit** before leaving CommonHelp.

- + **This does not apply to renewal applications. Renewals must be completed in one sitting.**

Returning to Your Application

To come back to the application at a later time, go to the CommonHelp home page. Click “Get Started” and select the radio button next to “Login to keep working on an application you have already started.” Enter the User ID and password you created during the setup of the account.